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Commission on the Status of Women
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Item 3 (a) of the provisional agenda*
Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives: review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session and its contribution to shaping a gender perspective in the realization of the Millennium Development Goals

Statement by African Action on AIDS, the European Union of Women, the Foundation for Subjective Experience and Research, Hadassah: Women's Zionist Organization of America, the International Alliance of Women, the International Association of Democratic Lawyers, the International Council of Jewish Women, International Federation for Home Economics, the International Federation of Business and Professional Women, the International Federation of Social Workers, the Federation of University Women, the International National Council of German Women's Organizations, the Pan Pacific and South-East Asia Women's Association of Thailand, Servas International, Socialist International Women, Soroptimist International, The Salvation Army, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, the Women's Federation for World Peace International, the Women's International Zionist Organization and ZONTA International, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/CN.6/2010/1.

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Statement

1. We, the undersigned international and national non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, members of the Vienna NGO Committee on the Status of Women, present to the fifty-fourth session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women the following statement on "Gender-sensitive medicine and the empowerment of women" for information and consideration.

2. Recalling paragraph 17 of the Beijing Declaration, in which Governments expressed their conviction that "the explicit recognition and reaffirmation of the right of all women to control all aspects of their health, in particular their own fertility, is basic to their empowerment", and in view of the fact that it has been scientifically proven that the female body reacts differently to medical procedures, treatment, rehabilitation and pharmaceutical products, a fact which has been neglected so far by all actors and medical institutions concerned, the undersigned non-governmental organizations:

(a) Emphasize the importance of gender-sensitive medicine;

(b) Strongly believe that the promotion of women's and girls' health, including their reproductive health, throughout their lifecycle through accessible and gender-sensitive medical care is a precondition for their empowerment and will result in the improvement of the health of the entire society;

(c) Are convinced that health represents for women and girls the complete physical, emotional, mental and social well-being, and that it is therefore of vital importance to acknowledge gender differences in all aspects of health care, including medical and pharmaceutical research, training of health-care providers, treatment, therapy and rehabilitation as well as women's health assessment by insurance companies;

(d) Are appalled by the scandalous lack of progress in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, in particular Millennium Development Goal 5;

(e) Are convinced that imposed sexualized body images of female appearance are detrimental to the physical and mental health of women and girls.

3. We therefore urge Governments to:

(a) Provide adequate funding of scientific research in gender medicine, the provision of data disaggregated by sex to achieve optimal health programmes that take into account factors such as gender differences, age groups and ethnicity;

(b) Allocate national budgets favouring gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, especially with a view to gender-sensitive medicine;

(c) Undertake all efforts to ensure that female genital mutilation be eradicated worldwide;

(d) Combine gender-sensitive and culture-sensitive medical care for women and girls with migrant backgrounds, guaranteeing them access to medical information and treatment;

(e) Implement measures to ensure gender-sensitive access to medical information and treatment for women and girls with disabilities.